

Eastern Sierra Nevada & Northern Mojave Desert Recreation Information Update February 23 – 29, 2012

Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Junction of US HWY 395 & SR 136
Lone Pine, California 93545

(760) 876-6222
TDD 876-6228

Open Daily: 8:00am to 5:00pm

ROADS: Major Eastern Sierra roads are open, including HWY 395. Trans Sierra roads – SR 120 (Tioga Pass), SR 108 (Sonora Pass) and SR 4 (Ebbets Pass) are closed for the winter. SR 89 (Monitor Pass) is closed for the winter. South SR 158 is open to June Lake Village. Weather and road conditions can change rapidly this time of year; mountain passes are subject to immediate controls and/or closures. Drivers headed to the mountains need to be sure their vehicles are equipped with chains, including those with snowtires. Call 1-800-427-ROAD (1-800-427-7623) or visit the website at www.dot.ca.gov, for California highway conditions and construction schedules. For Nevada roads, call 1-877-NVROADS (1-877-687-6237) or visit the web at www.nevadadot.com.

SR 270, the **BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK** road is closed for the winter. The Rock Creek road is open to the SnoPark at East Fork. In Bishop Creek, SR 168 is open to Aspendell and the South Lake road is open to Bishop Creek Lodge.

Major highways through **DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK** are open. The Big Pine, Titus Canyon, Salt Creek, Devils Golf Course and West Side dirt roads are open. The Upper Wildrose road is open with snow to the Charcoal Kilns; 4x4 high clearance recommended. The North Saline Valley road is open with snow and ice; 4x4 high clearance recommended (carry chains). The South Pass into Saline Valley is posted closed by Inyo County (4x4 high clearance vehicles required). Rangers ask visitors traveling to remote locations to leave a complete itinerary at home, obtain a good backcountry road map and be prepared for the unexpected. Drivers need to be sure their vehicle is in good condition and to carry an additional spare tire, extra gas, food and water. For backcountry roads information, check the website at www.nps.gov/deva ("Plan Your Visit/Things To Do/Outdoor Activities") and the Morning Report for current conditions.

WEATHER: High pressure will build midweek, resulting in clear skies and warm temperatures for the Eastern Sierra and Northern Mojave. Several storm systems are expected to move north of the region starting on Saturday and continue through the middle of next week, with each system producing some high clouds and periods of gusty winds locally. There is a chance of mountain snow on Saturday, Monday and again late Tuesday. Temperatures should drop to near normal over the weekend. Highs have been in the 30s in the mountains, upper 60s in the Owens Valley and mid 80s in Death Valley, with the lows ranging from the lower 20s in the mountains, to the upper 40s in Death Valley.

CAMPGROUNDS: **INYO COUNTY** campgrounds are open. The **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT** campgrounds at Tuttle Creek (fee/no water) and the Pleasant Valley Pit (fee/no water) are open. Additional privately operated campgrounds & RV facilities are open throughout the area.

INYO NATIONAL FOREST, Lone Pine to Lee Vining – the following campgrounds are open: Lone Pine (no water/no fee), Bitterbrush (no water/no fee) and Holiday in Rock Creek (no water/no fee).

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK – Yosemite Valley campgrounds have sites open and reservable. Reservations are accepted five months in advance on the 15th of each month, for a one-month block through www.recreation.gov; or call 1-877-444-6777. Sites are available on a first-come, first-served basis at Wawona (SR 41 south of Yosemite Valley), Hodgdon Meadows (SR 120, near Big Oak Flat) and Camp Four walk-in campground in Yosemite Valley. For information, visit the web site at www.nps.gov/yose.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK, open sites include: Sunset, Texas Spring, Stovepipe Wells, Mesquite Springs, Emigrant (tent only/no fee) and Wildrose (no fee). Furnace Creek campground is closed for sewer and water line replacement, estimated opening in May; other campgrounds are available in the area. RV hook-ups are available at Furnace Creek Ranch, Stovepipe Wells Village and Panamint Springs Resort. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/deva.

RED ROCK CANYON STATE PARK, on SR 14 south of Ridgecrest, offers great desert camping.

Camping sites are available year round in the **MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE** at Hole-In-The-Wall and Mid Hills on a first-come/first-served basis. For more information, call 1-760-252-6108, or visit the web at www.nps.gov/moja. Black Canyon Equestrian & Group Campground (across from Hole-In-The-Wall) is open with reservations required, call 1-760-928-2572.

Cooperating Agencies of the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center

Inyo County
California - Department of Fish & Game
City of Los Angeles - Department of Water & Power

California - Department of Transportation
National Park Service

Bureau of Land Management
Mono County
USDA - Forest Service

FISHING: The **OWENS RIVER** south of Crowley Lake (including Pleasant Valley Reservoir and Tinnemaha Reservoir) and **DIAZ LAKE** are open to year-round fishing. Copies of California fishing regulations are available on the web at www.dfg.ca.gov.

WINTER SPORTS: **MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN** is open with a 4 to 6 foot base. For daily lift operation and snow conditions visit the web site at www.mammothmountain.com, or call 1-888-766-9778. **JUNE MOUNTAIN** is open with a 12 to 24 inch base, check the web at www.junemountain.com, or call 1-760-934-2224 for more information.

TAMARACK CROSS COUNTRY SKI CENTER in the Mammoth Lakes Basin is open with 11 miles of set track; for information call 1-760-934-2442. The **SNOPARK IN ROCK CREEK** at East Fork is open for the winter. Self-issue parking permits are available on site, or can be purchased (for the day or season) in advance at many locations. SnoPark permits may also be purchased online at www.ohv.parks.ca.gov.

Visit the **MAMMOTH LAKES WELCOME CENTER** for current snow conditions, trail maps and avalanche risk; open daily 8:00am to 5:00pm, or call 1-760-924-5500. The **EASTERN SIERRA AVALANCHE CENTER (ESAC)** offers avalanche advisories and an on-line discussion center for the region. For information, check the web site at www.esavalanche.org.

BACKCOUNTRY: Backpackers should be prepared with winter gear for snowy/icy terrain, freezing temperatures and sudden weather changes. The roads to most trailheads are closed for the winter. **WILDERNESS PERMITS** are required for overnight travel all year long. Trailhead quotas, which daily limit the number of hikers on trails, are no longer in effect for Eastern Sierra wilderness areas. Self-issue permits can be obtained in the night boxes at the following locations: InterAgency Visitor Center (Lone Pine), White Mountain Ranger Station (Bishop), Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center, Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center (Lee Vining) and Bridgeport Ranger Station after office hours. For information on Inyo National Forest wilderness permits, including the new reservation system, please visit the web at www.fs.usda.gov/inyo.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

BODIE STATE HISTORIC PARK is open daily 9:00am to 3:00pm. Visitors must use over-snow transportation to access the park. Bring drinking water, food and plenty of warm clothes for a winter visit to Bodie (recreation fee area).

Visit the Mono Lake Committee & Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce Information Center, open daily 9:00am to 5:00pm for lots of information on the **MONO BASIN NATIONAL FOREST SCENIC AREA/MONO LAKE TUFA STATE RESERVE**.

Remember the days of the "Slim Princess"! Visit **LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM & HISTORIC SITE**, four miles north of Bishop on HWY 6, to learn of early days in the Owens Valley. Laws is open daily 10:00am to 4:00pm.

EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM in Independence is open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily, with exhibits on Inyo County; including a significant collection of Native American baskets and artifacts from Manzanar NHS.

The Interpretive Center at **MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**, located 5 miles south of Independence, is open daily from 9:00am to 4:30pm. Self-guided walking and auto tours make it easy to explore the park. Check at the Interpretive Center, or the web at www.nps.gov/manz, for more information.

Visit the Beverly & Jim Rogers **MUSEUM OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY**; with exhibits celebrating the heroes, the films and the locations of the many movies shot in the area. The museum opens daily at 10:00am; closing at 6:00pm Monday through Wednesday, at 7:00pm Thursday through Saturday and at 4:00pm on Sunday.

Discover the natural and cultural history of the **MOJAVE DESERT** at the **MATURANGO MUSEUM AND NORTHERN MOJAVE VISITOR CENTER OF THE INDIAN WELLS VALLEY** in Ridgecrest; open daily 10:00am to 5:00pm. Reservations for the Spring Petroglyph tours are open; for more information call 1-760-375-6900, or visit the web at www.maturango.org.

Randsburg and Mojave Desert mining history is presented for all to learn and enjoy at the **RAND DESERT MUSEUM**. The quaint mining town of Randsburg is located just west of HWY 395, 30 miles north of Kramer Junction (20 miles south of Ridgecrest). The museum, open on Saturday, Sunday and most holidays from 10:00am to 4:00pm and is located in the center of town.

BLM JAWBONE STATION REGIONAL OHV FACILITY is open 9:00am to 5:00pm daily for trip assistance. The station is located 25 miles north of Mojave on SR 14 for pre-trip information; call 1-760-373-1146.

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK VISITOR CENTER at Furnace Creek is remodeled and open daily, 8:00am to 5:00pm. Ranger talks and interpretive programs are presented daily. An evening program is presented at 7:00pm. **SCOTTY'S CASTLE** has "Living History" tours from 9:00am to 5:00pm, and "Underground Mystery Tours" daily. Lower Vine Ranch was Scotty's real home in Death Valley. Several tours are planned each week. Call 1-760-786-2392 for the tour schedule. Reservations for Scotty's Castle or Lower Vine Ranch walking tours are available on the web at recreation.gov, or call 1-877-444-6777.

Information on the **MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE** can be obtained daily from 9:00am to 5:00pm at the **Kelso Depot Visitor Center** (off I 15 at Baker or off I 40 on Kelbaker Road). Kelso Depot ranger talks are offered daily at 11:00am and 2:00pm. The Kelso Dunes interpretive walk is offered on Saturdays at 11:00am. The **Hole-in-the-Wall Information Center** is open Wednesday through Sunday, from 9:00am to 4:00pm, with interpretive activities on the weekends.

Reports on current recreation conditions, schedules of planned events and detailed information on visitor destinations throughout the Eastern Sierra Nevada and Northern Mojave Desert are available daily at the Visitor Center. 2/23/12kcw